

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### PAYING TRIBUTE TO CAM USHER

#### HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2006*

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cam Usher, who is retiring after a long and distinguished career of promoting tourism in Las Vegas.

Cam Usher has been working for the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority in a multitude of capacities for the past 25 years. Since 2004, Cam has directed sales and marketing for the authority's international offices in Austria, England, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, and South Korea. Since her career began with the authority in 1980, she has run everything from convention and special event sales to the authority's research department and the Las Vegas News Bureau. Most recently, Cam has actively recruited new international air service in conjunction with McCarren International Airport; her efforts have made it easier for travelers to come here to visit from diverse locations. During her tenure, she received a number of accolades, such as being named to the Travel Agent Magazine's "Most Powerful Women in Travel" list 3 years in a row. Cam's professional successes should not over shadow her philanthropic endeavors; her generosity is profoundly evident in everything she does, whether it is introducing friends to potential clients or creating job opportunities of local youth.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Cam Usher for her illustrious career and contributions to the development of the international tourism industry in Las Vegas. I wish her the best in her retirement.

### HEALTH CENTERS RENEWAL AMENDMENTS OF 2006

#### HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2006*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleague from Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, in introducing the Health Centers Renewal Amendments of 2006. This important legislation will re-authorize the Health Center program through fiscal year 2011 and enable us to build on the tremendous successes that the health centers have already achieved.

With 46 million Americans currently living without health insurance, health centers have become a critical feature of our country's safety net. Of the more than 14 million Americans served by health centers, 75 percent are either uninsured or Medicaid beneficiaries. In fact, more than 90 percent of health center clients have incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Without health centers to provide quality primary and preventive care,

these folks would most likely forgo health care and end up in our hospital emergency rooms.

Health centers are not free clinics. While health centers do not turn away patients due to an inability to pay, every patient pays something based on a sliding scale. This policy improves both financial and health outcomes, ensuring that patients are invested in their health care and follow the doctor's orders.

Another critical feature of the health center program is the community board. For approval and funding as a federally-qualified health center, a center must have put in place a board of directors whose membership is at least 51 percent comprised of health center patients. While communities may initially view this aspect of the health center program as a significant hurdle, this requirement ensures that community health centers are just that—grounded in the community. With a community board governing the health center, patients are assured that all health center policies have been developed with the needs of patients in mind. It is the complementary nature of these requirements that has helped the health center program become so effective and enjoy unprecedented bi-partisan support, from both the Congress and the Bush Administration.

Despite the accomplishments to date of the health center program, much more work needs to be done. While the number of health centers has increased by 58 percent since 1997, the number of health center patients has increased by 90 percent over the same period. There is still tremendous need and, unfortunately, the ranks of the uninsured are only growing.

In the Houston area, we now have nine federally-qualified health centers, an increase from the four centers we had in our area just one year ago. While we have celebrated that achievement, our state of Texas still has the largest percentage of uninsured individuals in the country, and many more health centers are needed in our state to meet our growing need for quality health care that is affordable. This legislation will help us address that need by ensuring the continued authorization of this important program that has improved the health of millions of our constituents.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my friend, Mr. BILIRAKIS, for all of his work over the years on behalf of our health centers. He is a tireless champion of this program, and I look forward to working with him to make sure that the reauthorization of this program is just one of the many health care accomplishments that will be part of his legacy in Congress.

### TRIBUTE TO THE BARON DE KALB COUNCIL NO. 1073 OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

#### HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2006*

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of the

Baron De Kalb Council No. 1073 of the Knights of Columbus and to offer my thanks for the continual dedication it has shown to the southern Brooklyn communities it serves. The Baron De Kalb Council No. 1073 was founded in 1906 by Ambrose P. Rikeman, who became their first Grand Knight. It was founded on the principals of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism, principals that have been ingrained in the hearts and minds of its members ever since. The Council is named for Baron Johann De Kalb, a courageous and loyal military leader whose spirit continues to live on in the leaders of this great Council.

The Baron De Kalb Council No. 1073 has risen from its humble beginnings, when a small band of men met in Grand Knight Rikeman's house, to its present day thousands strong membership that meets at the "Baron-By-The-Sea", a property purchased by the Council in scenic Sheepshead Bay in 1949. In 1969 members were devastated to learn that a fire had destroyed their "Baron-By-The-Sea", but no fire could destroy the members commitment, dedication and desire to reach ever greater achievements for their beloved Council. In 1973 Grand Knight Gus Rogers proudly led his members into the newly built "Baron-By-the-Sea", the structure on Nostrand and Emmons Avenues that continues to provide invaluable services to its members and our southern Brooklyn community to this day.

Therefore, on Behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I congratulate the Baron De Kalb Council No. 1073 of the Knights of Columbus and all of its past and present members for 100 years of dedication and service to our community.

### HONORING PETER LOJACONO

#### HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2006*

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, April 30, the Federation of Italian-American Societies of Western New York will hold its annual celebration. Following Sunday Mass at historic St. Anthony of Padua Church in the shadow of Buffalo City Hall, celebrants will gather at Buffalo's Adam's Mark Hotel to mark this celebration.

At this event, a truly unique person will be honored with the Association's God, Family and Country award. That person is Peter LoJacono, and I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to rise to honor Peter today.

Peter LoJacono is a lifelong resident of Western New York, having been graduated from St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute and, later, from my own alma mater, Buffalo State College. Peter has taught Italian and Spanish at Hutchison Technical High School in the Buffalo Public School system for 18 years, where he has demonstrated a commitment to his students that is second to none.

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